



UNDER 18: NO TOBACCO SALES

Frederick County's Tobacco Sales Compliance Program

Background

Synar Amendment

In July 1992, Congress enacted the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration Reorganization Act (PL 102-321), which includes an amendment (section 1926) aimed at decreasing youth access to tobacco. This amendment requires states to enact and enforce laws prohibiting the sale or distribution of tobacco products to individuals under the age of 18.

Synar Regulation

The regulation requires that states:

- Enact laws prohibiting any manufacturer, retailer, or distributor of tobacco products from selling or distributing such products to any individual younger than age 18
- Enforce these laws
- Conduct annual, unannounced inspections that provide a valid probability sample of tobacco sales outlets accessible to minors, achieving a noncompliance rate of no more than 20%.

Penalty for state non-compliance is loss of up to 40% of Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant Funds (nearly \$14 Million in Maryland).

Recent Synar Rates

	State of Maryland	Frederick County
2012	17.3%	0.0%
2013	16.8%	0.0%
2014	24.1%	11.1%
2015	31.4%	5.3%

Program Components

Compliance Checks

- Conducted by Frederick Police Department, Brunswick Police Department and Thurmont Police Department to ensure businesses comply with youth access laws.

Merchant Education

- Mailing to all licensed businesses to inform them of the initiative, provide basic information regarding youth access laws and inform them about the upcoming merchant education and compliance checks.
- Face to face education of all licensed tobacco merchants conducted by Frederick County Health Department staff and community partners.
- Group education in partnership with Frederick County Liquor Board.
- Local radio PSA's targeted at tobacco retailer employees.

Tobacco Education Group (TEG)

- Diversion program for youth found breaking the Frederick County Public School tobacco policy or those in the Department of Juvenile Services found to be illegally using tobacco products.

Community Outreach

- Attending community events and meetings to increase awareness.

Impact on Our Community

State Funds

Being non-compliant with this regulation puts millions of grants dollars used for various substance abuse prevention and treatment programs on the line. An alternative penalty allows states to find a large sum of money from their general budget to address and rectify the issue. Both options take funds away from needed local and state programs.

Health and Safety of Our Youth

- Everyday 4000 kids under the age of 18 will try their first cigarette and 1300 will become daily smokers.
- 1 in 3 current smokers started before they were 14.
- 20% of Frederick County High School students are currently using tobacco products.
- 16% of Frederick County High School students under the age of 18 who are current smokers have bought their own cigarettes in the past 30 days.
- 1 in 3 youth smokers will eventually die of tobacco related disease.

Reducing youth access to tobacco products protects youth from the lifelong effects of smoking.

How Community Members Can Help

Say Something

- If you see a tobacco merchant sell to a minor or fail to check ID, say something! Remind the employee that its illegal to sell tobacco products to minors and checking ID is the best way to avoid doing so.

Refer Tobacco Retailers

- Know a local store sells tobacco products to minors or see it happen? Call the anonymous tip line to report the retail at 1-877-CTP-1373 (1-877-287-1373)

Spread the Word

- Share this information with your friends and neighbors.
- Talk to your kids, grandkids and nieces/nephews about the dangers of tobacco use.